Rashi on Hosea
רש"י על הושע
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Rashi on Hosea

Chapter 1

Verse 1

The word of the Lord which came to Hosea the son of Beeri in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, etc. He buried these four kings during his lifetime, for he outlived them all. From here they derived the maxim: Woe is to authority, for it buries its holders [from Pesachim 87b].
and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash He was of the sons of Jehu [i.e., a great grandson of Jehu], and he too reigned with Uzziah and Jotham, but a meritorious deed caused him to be counted with these righteous men, since he did not heed slander concerning Amos, as is explained in Pesachim, in the chapter entitled הָאִשָּׁה, "The woman" (87b), as it is stated: "(Amos 7:10) And Amaziah sent etc. 'Amos has conspired against you etc.'"

Verse 2

At the beginning of the Lord's speaking to Hosea Lit. in the beginning the Lord spoke to Hosea. Therefore, our Rabbis stated: The first of the four prophets who prophesied (in these days): Hosea, Isaiah, Amos, and Micah. [Parshandatha reads: in the days of Uzziah. Michah, in fact, is not mentioned as having prophesized in the days of Uzziah, but only in the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah; this will be explained further. In Pesachim 87a, we read: at that time] Isaiah prophesized [at the time of the earthquake (Parshandatha)], as it is stated: (Isaiah 6:4) "And the doorposts quaked etc." And that was the day that Uzziah was stricken when he entered the Temple, for the ethereal beings clamored to burn him, and the earthly beings to swallow him as the punishment of Korah's company, among which there were [some] swallowed up and [some] burned. Concerning Amos, it is stated: (Amos 1:1) "Two years before the earthquake." [Amos, accordingly, preceded Isaiah.] And Micah was the last of all of them, for it is said concerning him: (Micah 1:1) "In the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah," and Uzziah is not mentioned in his regard (Cf. Pesachim 87a; Seder Olam, ch. 20; Tanhuma Tzav 13; Rashi, Isaiah 6:4). But the simple meaning of the verse is: At the beginning of the speech which the Holy One, blessed be He, spoke to Hosea, he said this to him.
take yourself a wife of harlotry Our Rabbis said: This is to be explained according to its apparent meaning: Since he said about Israel, "Exchange them for another nation," as is explained in Pesachim at the beginning of the chapter entitled האשה, "The woman" (87a).
and children of harlotry For she will bear you children who will be of possible illegitimacy. And Jonathan paraphrased: Prophesy a prophecy about the inhabitants of the cities of idolatry. The word זְנוּנִים, stated here

is an expression of teaching, [derived from לֶקַח, doctrine]. Teach them to repent.
goes astray Heb. תִּזְנֶה. This is the present tense.

Verse 3

Gomer Our Rabbis (Pesachim 87a) said. That was her name by dint of her harlotry, for all would gratify their lust on her (גּוּמְרִין) and they would tread upon her like a pressed fig (דְּבֵלָה). [That is a euphemism for sexual contact.] Jonathan, however, paraphrases: גְּמַר, that if they would return from their way, their retribution would be finished, and if not, they will be like unripe figs falling from the fig tree.
and she conceived and bore Jonathan paraphrases: And they continued to do evil deeds.

Verse 4

Name him Jezreel Jonathan renders: Call their name the scattered ones. I.e. prophesy over them that they will be exiled, and they will be sown among the peoples.
the blood of Jezreel To be understood according to its Aramaic translation: the blood of the house of Ahab, whom Jehu slew in Jezreel because they worshipped Baal, and he and his sons went afterwards and worshipped pagan deities; therefore, I account for them the blood of the house of Ahab as innocent blood.
upon the house of Jehu Jeroboam the son of Joash was of the sons of Jehu, and his son Zechariah was assassinated.

Verse 5

Verse 6

I will not continue to grant clemency Heb. אֲרַחֵם, like לְרַחֵם, to grant clemency.
but I will mete out their portion to them I will mete out to them the portion of their cup and their deed. This expression is like (Gen. 43:34), "And he gave out portions (וַיִּשָּׂא מַשְׂאֹת)."

Verse 7

But to the house of Judah will I grant clemency after I terminate the kingdom of Israel, for after the ten tribes were exiled, the house of Judah was the object of clemency from Hezekiah until Zedakiah.

Verse 8

And she weaned Lo ruhamah According to the Targum, we explain: And that generation shall perish among the nations where they were exiled.
and she conceived and bore a son According to the Targum: And they continued and committed evil deeds. But according to its simple meaning, we explain it as it apparently means.

Chapter 2

Verse 1

And the number...shall be What is the connection of retribution and consolation juxtaposed in one speech? Our Rabbis explained in Pesachim (87b): Hosea felt that he had sinned by saying, "Exchange them for another nation." He stood and begged mercy for them (See above 1:2). And in Sifrei Devei Rav, in the section commencing: "And Israel abode in Shittim" (Num. 25) we learned: Rabbi says: Some sections are close to each other yet as far apart as east is far from west. "For you are not My people... And the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea." What is the connection of one to the other? This can be compared to a king who became angry with his wife. He summoned a scribe to come and write a bill of divorcement. Before the scribe arrived, the king became reconciled with his wife. Said the king, "Is it possible that this scribe should leave here divided?" I.e. his heart should be divided and bewildered, saying, "Why did the king send for me?" He said to him, "Come and write that I am doubling her kethubah." And according to its simple meaning, this is the reason for its juxtaposition. "For you are not My people, and I will not be yours." I will show Myself as though I am not yours, and you shall be exiled among the nations, and even there you shall multiply and grow, and there you shall lay it to your heart to return to Me, as it is said through Moses (Deut. 30:1,3): "And you shall lay it to your heart among all the nations where...has exiled you etc. And the Lord your God shall return your captivity." Here too, "And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together."

Verse 2

one head David their king.
for great is the day of Jezreel The gathering of their sowing.

Verse 3

Say to your brethren, "Ammi" To be explained according to the Targum: Return to My Torah, and I will grant clemency to your nation.

Verse 4

Strive with your mother, strive With your nation of today, which is the mother of future generations.
and her adulteries from between her breasts It is customary among the adulteresses that they [i.e., their lovers] squeeze them between their breasts. Jonathan renders: And the worship of idols from among her cities.

Verse 5

as [on] the day she was born Like the day that I found her in Egypt, as is delineated in Ezekiel (16: 4, 5): "And as for your birth, on the day you were born your navel was not cut etc. No eye took pity on you etc. with a loathing of your body."
like a desert This alludes to the decrees that I decreed upon you (Parshandatha: them) in the desert, viz. that there they should perish and there they would die (Num. 14:35).
and [I will] cause her to die Jonathan renders: And I will kill her.

Verse 6

Verse 7

their mother Their nation.
she who conceived them behaved shamefully Jonathan, who renders: Their teachers are ashamed. The wise men who teach them with instructions are ashamed before the ignorant populace. They tell them, "You shall not steal," but they steal. "You shall not lend for interest," but they lend.
after my lovers In the ways of the nations.

Verse 8

behold I will close off Heb. שָׂךְ an expression of closing. Comp. (Isaiah 5:5) "remove its hedge (מְשׂוּכָתוֹ)"; (Proverbs 15:19) "as though hedged (כִּמְשֻׂכַת) by thorns."
your way The ways and paths in which you go.

Verse 9

And she shall pursue Heb. וְרִדְפָה This is one of the intensive conjugations. Comp. (Proverbs 12:11) "and he who pursues empty ones" (porcacier in O.F:, poursuivra in modern French), to pursue. I.e. she will follow them and not overtake them.
her lovers Egypt and Assyria, and you will not be able to seek aid from them.
and she shall seek them Heb. וּבִקְשָׁתַם, a combination of וּבִקְשָׁה אוֹתָם.

Verse 10

But she did not know She did not lay it to her heart, but showed herself as unknowing.
and I gave her much silver and gold but they made it for Baal.

Verse 11

in its time At the time the produce completes its ripening.
and I will separate [Heb. וְהִצַּלְתִּי] from her.
My wool and My flax. which was to cover her nakedness. Every expression of הָצָלָה in Scripture is an expression of separation and setting apart. Proof of this we find in (Gen. 31:9) "And God separated (וַיַּצֵּל) your father's cattle," (ibid.:16) "For all the wealth that... separated (הִצִּיל)."

Verse 12

and no man shall save her from My hand Even the merits of the Patriarchs have been depleted. [from Shabbath 55a]

Verse 13

Verse 14

And I will lay waste Heb. וְהַשְׁמֹתִי, an expression of desolation (שְׁמָמָה).
hire אֶתְנָה, like אֶתְנָן.
and I will make them a forest where the beasts walk and eat the fruit.

Verse 15

And I will visit upon her the retribution of...
the days of the baalim to whom she burnt incense constantly to them, and this is a present tense.

and she adorned herself with her earrings and her jewelry Heb. וַתַּעַד, an expression of jewelry (עֶדִי). Like a harlot who adorns herself to greet her paramours.
And חֶלְיָתָהּ is an Arabic term meaning jewelry.

Verse 16

Therefore, behold I will allure her I will persuade her to be drawn after Me (losanjier in O.F., to flatter or cajole). Other editions read: atrayray in O.F. (attirerai). I will lure, attract. And what is the allurement? and lead her into the desert In exile, which is to her like a desert and a wasteland. And there she will lay up to her heart that it was better for her when she performed My will than when she rebelled against Me.

Verse 17

her vineyards Jonathan rendered this as an expression of managers and leaders. Comp. (Job 24: 18) "he will not face the way of the vineyards," meaning that the people of the generation of the flood had made up their mind not to follow the righteous leaders, such as Noah and Methusalah. And so, (Song 1:6) "my vineyard I did not guard." The allusion is to the worship of idols instead of worshipping God, the Leader. Another explanation: and lead her into the desert To the desert of Sihon and Og, and with the same expression Ezekiel prophesied (20:35, 38), "And I will bring you there to the desert of the peoples, and I will contend with you there, etc. As I continued with your forefathers etc., and I will bring them into the tradition of the covenant. And I will purge you of those who rebel..." but the righteous I will keep alive. That is the intention of "her vineyards." [from Ruth Rabbah 5:6, Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 49b].
and the depth of trouble Heb. עֶמֶק עָכוֹר. The depth of the exile where they were troubled I will give her for a door of hope (an expectation of hope), for, out of those troubles, she will take heart to return to Me.
and she shall dwell there Heb. וְעָנְתָה, an expression of dwelling. Comp. (Nahum 2:12) "a den (מָעוֹן) of lions." [from Machbereth Menachem p. 135]
as in the days of her youth when she dwelt in Egypt a long time.
and as the day of her ascent, etc. as Israel cried out to me in Egypt because of the subjugation and I redeemed her, so also now.

Verse 18

you shall call [Me] Ishi, etc You shall worship Me out of love and not out of fear. Ishi is an expression of marriage and the love of one's youth.
Baali An expression of mastership and fear. And our Rabbis (Pesachim 87a, Kethuboth 71b) explained: Like a bride in her father-in-law's house, and not like a bride in her father's house.

Verse 19

and they shall no longer be mentioned I.e. Israel shall no longer be mentioned by the name of the baalim. Or, the baalim shall no longer be mentioned by the name of Israel, saying that they are their gods. Or, the name of the baalim shall no longer be mentioned, as it is stated. (Isa. 2:18) "And the idols shall completely pass away."

Verse 20

with the beasts of the field for I will destroy harmful creatures from the world. And so Scripture states (Isa. 11:9): “They shall neither harm nor destroy etc.”

Verse 21

with righteousness and with justice which you practice.
and with loving-kindness and with mercy which will come to you from Me because of them. Concerning our father Abraham, it is written (Gen 18:19): “For I love him since he commands etc. to perform righteousness and justice.” And, corresponding to them, He bestowed upon his children loving-kindness and mercy, as it is said (Deut. 13:18): “And He shall grant you mercy”; (ibid. 7:12) “And the Lord your God shall keep for you the covenant and the loving-kindness.” When they ceased to perform righteousness and justice, as it is said (Amos 5:7): “Those who turn justice into wormwood, and righteousness they leave on the ground,” also the Holy One, blessed be He, took away from them the loving-kindness and the mercy, as it is said (Jer. 16:5): “for I have gathered in My peace from this people, says the Lord, the loving- kindness and the mercies.” And when they will return to perform righteousness and justice, they shall be redeemed immediately, as it is said (Isa. 1:27): “Zion shall be redeemed through justice, and her penitent through righteousness.” And the Holy One, blessed be He, will add mercy and loving- kindness to them and make a crown of all four of them and place it on their head.

Verse 22

And I will betroth you to Me with faith For the reward of the faith, for, while in exile, you believed in the promises through My prophets. [from Mechilta 14:31 with variations]

Verse 23

I will answer the heavens to pour upon the clouds from the rivulet of good that depends on My word. They will, in turn, answer to pour water upon the earth.

Verse 24

Jezreel The people of the exile who were scattered and then in gathered.

Verse 25

And I will sow her for Me in the land As one who sows a se’ah in order to gather many korim, so will many proselytes be added to them. [from Pesachim 87b]

Chapter 3

Verse 1

beloved by her companion Cherished by her husband and beloved to him, who [nonetheless] commits adultery under his domain, [paralleling thereby] the love of the Holy One, Blessed Is He, for the nation of Israel who [nonetheless] stray from under His domain towards other gods.
goblets of grapes Heb. אֲשִׁישֵׁי עֲנָבִים. Menahem (Machbereth p. 34) explains. ‘goblets of wine.’ They are fond of becoming drunk with their wine and do

not engage in Torah. And so we find that elsewhere he castigates for this: "that drink wine in bowls, etc" (Amos 6:6).

Verse 2

And I bought her It is an expression of a business transaction, 'bargaine' in Old French, similar to "which I have purchased (קָנִיתִי) for me" (Gen. 50:5). Now in the sea-towns they refer to a sale (Heb. מְכִירָה) as כִּירָה [from Hullin 92a].
for fifteen pieces of silver, and a chomer of barley and a lethech of barley Jonathan paraphrases: "And I redeemed them at My command on the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan, and I made shekalim of silver an atonement for their souls, and I declared that they offer before me an 'omer' as heave-offering from the barley harvest; that is to say, I did not weary you with difficult duties."
for fifteen pieces of silver It is the numerical equivalent of Nissan. Now in the Pesikta it is expounded: "fifteen pieces of silver," on the fifteenth day of Nissan. Now a chomer and a lethech total forty-five, for the chomer equals thirty seah, and the lethech is a half- chomer.

Verse 3

and I said to her: You shall remain as mine for many days The plural "days" refers to (a minimum) of two, "many" to (a minimum of) three, making a total of five. This (the forty-five of the previous verse added to the five of this verse) alludes to the fifty days between Passover and Pentecost. On that day I offered her the Torah, admonishing her:
you shall not play the harlot and you shall not belong to another man [that is], "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3); so... will I be towards you "I am the Lord your God" (Ex. 20:2). Now the reason he split the fifty days into separate calculations, one at the conclusion of "chomer" (i.e., 50 days), the other at the conclusion of "lethech" (i.e., the ensuing 15 days), is to represent the "manna" that descended upon them at the culmination of thirty days [from their exodus] on the fifteenth day (sic) of Iyar. From that point, for an [additional] fifteen daysthe numerical equivalent of the number of seah in a lethechon that day they arrived in the Sinai desert on the first day of the month of Sivan. Now in the name of Rav Hai I found a most fitting thing: "So I bought her to me etc.," (verse 2) I have established her atonement indemnity money as a light sum, for whosoever states: "My valuation is incumbent upon me to contribute to the sanctuary, should he be from the age of sixty and above" his valuation shall be fifteen shekels (Lev. 27:7). This sum of fifteen shekels is, according to this interpretation, symbolized by the fifteen pieces of silver of v. 2): Now the "chomer" of barley [represents] the valuation of a male aged twenty and above until sixty, viz. fifty shekels (see Lev. 27:3), the amount of redemption money of a chomer of barley which is similarly fifty silver shekels (See Lev. 27:16: "And if a man shall dedicate to the Lord some part of his field...the seed of a "chomer" of barley shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.") Now regarding the lethech of barley, the amount for redeeming a field containing a lethech of barley for the sanctuary is twenty-five shekels, which is [equal to the sum of] the valuation of someone from one month up to five years, which equals five shekels (Lev. 27:6), and that of one from five years up to twenty years, in which cases, "the valuation shall be twenty shekels (Lev. 27:5)," totalling twenty-five shekels. After all this display of affection [by allowing for such relatively easy absolution,] I said to her: [3] You shall remain as mine for many days; you shall not play the harlot by turning to other gods, for, if you do play the harlot, your children shall remain for many days... having neither king nor prince nor sacrifice in the Temple in

Judah. nor pillar The pillar of Baal in Samaria of the kings of Israel. nor ephod of the Urim and Tummim, which discloses to them hidden things. teraphim They are images constructed, having in mind a particular hour established, at which time they speak of their own accord and tell of hidden things. So does Jonathan translate: and there shall be no ephod or oracle.

Verse 4

Verse 5

Afterwards Following the days of exile.
shall the children of Israel return It was taught in the name of R. Shimon the son of Yochai: The children of Israel rejected three things during the reign of Rehoboam; the Kingdom of Heaven, the kingdom of the House of David, and the Holy Temple, as it is written: "What portion have we in David" (I Kings 12:16) which may be understood literally; "to your tents O' Israel" (ibid.), do not read, "to your tents" (Heb. לְאָהָלֶיךָ) but "to your gods" (Heb. לֵאלֹהֶיךָ) "now see your own house, David" (ibid.), refers to the Holy Temple (see Rashi I Kings 12:16). R. Shimon the son of Menassiah said: Israel shall not be shown any omen of good until they repent by seeking out all three; "Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek their Lord their God," which refers to the Kingdom of Heaven; "and David their king" is self explanatory; "and shall come trembling to the Lord and to His goodness," which refers to the Holy Temple, as it is written "that good mount" (Deut. 3:7) (a reference to the Temple Mount. [from Midrash Samuel 13:4]

Chapter 4

Verse 1

Verse 2

swearing and lying They swear falsely.
they break all bounds Jonathan paraphrases: They bear children from their friends' wives.
blood touches blood They multiply transgression upon transgression (Targum Jonathan). Now according to its more apparent meaning: they broke down all bounds and increased bloodshed until the blood of one murdered person touches the blood of another.

Verse 3

shall...mourn the land shall be destroyed and the mourning therein shall grow.
shall be diminished Heb. יֵאָסֵף. Jonathan renders: diminished because of their sins. It is an expression of destruction, similar to, "I will utterly consume them (אֶסְטֹף אֶסְיפֵם)" (Jeremiah 8:13).

Verse 4

let no man strive You forewarn the true prophets not to strive with you nor to reprove you, as it is written concerning Amos (7:16), that Amaziah

the priest of Bethel said to him (i.e. to Amos): "Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac." This transpired in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash in whose time Hosea prophesied.
them who strive with the priest They strive with their instructors, for the priests were the instructors, as it is written [concerning the priestly tribe of Levi]: "They shall teach Your judgments to Jacob, etc." (Deut. 33:10).

Verse 5

stumble You shall stumble in the daytime and the false prophets with you shall also stumble as if it were night, and I will (thereby) put to shame your assembly. [from Targum Jonathan]
the prophet that is with you To be understood as the plural: The prophets that are with you.
silence Heb. וְדָמִתִּי similar to: "my people were silenced (Heb. נִדְמוּ עַמִּי of v. 6)" just as a man who sits bewildered and cannot respond.

Verse 6

forget your children For those who stood on Mt. Sinai offered their children as surety for their parents to keep the Torah. [based on Tanhuma, vayigash 2, Mid. Psalms 8:4]

Verse 7

the more they have sinned against me As they multiplied and increased, so they continued to sin. (Heb. כֵּן חָטְאוּ.) So is the Hebrew expression in numerous places: "As they afflicted them, so they increased (Heb. כַּאֲשֶׁר יְעַנּוּ אוֹתוֹ כֵּן יִרְבֶּה);" "As they called them so they turned away from them, (Heb. קָרְאוּ לָהֶם כֵּן הָלְכוּ מִפָּנֶיהָם Hosea 11:2)," the more the prophets called after them to rebuke them, so they ran away from them.
the more they have increased the more they have sinned Therefore "I will exchange their glory for shame."

Verse 8

the sin-offerings of My people Heb. חַטַּאת־עַמִּי. Every (mention of) חַטַּאת in the books of the Twelve Prophets appear with (the diacritical voweling of) 'patachin' (under the letter ט) as follows: חַטַּאת, since all are connected (to the following word) with the exception of one: "she was the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion. (Heb. חַטָּאת הִיא לְבַת־צִיּוֹן Michah 1:3)." The sin-offerings of my nation shall be eaten by the false prophets concerning whom had been stated above: "and the prophet that is with you shall also stumble with you (v. 5)." They became for them priests of the high places who would eat what the legitimate priests should rightfully have eaten.
set their heart on their iniquity On the iniquity of the people of Israel, the prophet sets his heart; for the prophet himself hopes that they shall bring him money and sacrifices to expiate their sins.

Verse 9

like people, like priest I will equate the nation to the disgrace of the priests whom I desecrated from administering to them. So will I desecrate them among the nations. So had Jonathan translated.

Verse 10

shall not increase Shall not raise children.

Verse 11

take away the heart The harlotry and [old] wine and new wine with which they are involved have captured their hearts away from me.

Verse 12

takes counsel of his piece of wood Of the idol which he has made of wood.
declares to him To his words (the rod's) he hearkens: that which the prophets of Baal declare to him in the name of the idols.

Verse 13

oaks kʾsna (chʾna) in old French, upon which grows a fruit called 'glant' in old French (acorns).
styraxes Heb. לִבְנָה, a tree whose bark is white (Heb. לָבָן).
elms 'olma' in old French, whose branches are many and are planted for shade.
therefore Because you participate in idolatry, and the gentile nations join you, you therefore intermarry with them; [hence] your daughters born to you from their daughters act in the manner of their mothers and commit adultery. So does Jonathan interpret.

Verse 14

I will not punish your daughters anymore, to test them with the 'bitter waters' should they commit adultery. Why? Because their husbands join with harlots; for once the man is not free of sin, the waters do not test his wife. [based on Sifrei Num. 5:82 and Sotah 47a]
join Heb. יִפָּרֵדוּ. Jonathan translates מְסָתַּיְעָן from סִיעָה, 'a company,' that is, they join with them (the harlots) in drinking wine. Now Menahem [Machbereth Menahem p. 145] connects it with עָבְשׁוּ פְּרוּדוֹת "the wine barrels decay" (of Joel 1:17) where they (פְּרוּדוֹת) are wine barrels.
the people that does not understand shall be knocked about Because you do not set your heart to comprehend, therefore you shall be knocked about, struck with (divine) visitation: יִוָּבֵט is an expression of road weariness and toilsome burden, 'dʾlaser' in old French.

Verse 15

Though you, O Israel, play the harlot the sons of Judah ought not learn their (sic) way. An alternate explanation is: Though you, O Israel, play the harlot, let not Judah become guilty. Though Israel is as a harlot, the sons of Judah are not guilty thereof, and I shall [therefore] not hold them accountable, as it is written above (1:17): "But I will have compassion upon the house of Judah."
and do not come you sons of Judah to Gilgal. (Judah shall be blameless) provided the sons of Judah do not come to Gilgal where the ten tribes worship [idols], as it is stated: "All their wickedness is in Gilgal" (Hosea 9:15); "[Come] to Gilgal and multiply transgression" (Amos 4:4).
nor go up to Beth- aven This is Bethel (which is called by the pejorative, Beth-aven, house of iniquity), for Jeroboam set up the calves there.
nor swear with them (the Israelite kingdom) "as the Lord lives," "for if they say, 'As the Lord lives,' they, nevertheless, swear falsely" (Jer. 5:2). When they swore falsely, they would mention the name of Heaven, but when they swore truthfully, they would swear in the name of the Baalim.

Verse 16

like a rebellious cow Like a fattened ox which kicks, so has Israel strayed due to an abundance of food and drink.
now shall the Lord feed them a limited feeding, as a lamb who feeds in a wide [sparsely vegetated] area, rather than as a fattened ox which is stuffed with barley and vetch.

Verse 17

Ephraim is joined to idols [he] is joined to idols and cannot divest himself of them. Hence you, the prophet, 'let him alone,' and do not prophesy for the purpose of rebuking him since it will not avail.

Verse 18

Their drinking bouts have become strange Their drinking bouts have become estranged from Me. סָר is an expression of 'foreign.' Comp. (Jer. 2:21) "a degenerate wild vine (סוּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן נָכְרִיָּה)," i.e., removed from its place and changed to another.
סָבְאָם Their wine feast that was with the harlots.
love to invite disgrace Heb. הֵבוּ. They invited disgrace for themselves. הֵבוּ is an expression of preparation. Comp. (Gen. 11:4) "Get ready (הָבָה) and let us build," "Get ready (הָבָה) and let us descend," (Ex. 10: 1) "Get ready (הָבָה) and let us deal wisely."
her rulers Heb. מָגִנֶּיהָ, her shields, her princes and her kings.

Verse 19

The wind has bound her up in its wings The wind has attached itself to its wings, like a bird, which the wind does not permit to alight until it bears it off into the distance. So will the enemies come upon them and drive them into exile.
and they shall be ashamed of their altars Heb. מִזִּבְחוֹתָם, of the altars of their deities (lit. their abominations), to which they do not turn. Now, just as חֵטְא, sin, can be stated in the feminine as חֲטָאָה, so can one say, instead of זֶבח, זִבְחָה, which denotes the places where they would sacrifice. And so did Jonathan render: of the altars of their abominations. Addendum according to Abarbanel: I found a Midrash Tanhuma, where it is an expression of tying, like a man who threatens a person who provokes him, "[I swear] by your life that I will tie it to you at your end." So does this verse threaten Israel: "My zeal and My fury are tied up to avenge Myself at the end, and they will be ashamed of their deeds."

Chapter 5

Verse 1

for yours is the judgment The judgment of torments is upon you, O house of the king, for you have been a snare at Mizpah and a net on Tabor. On these two mountains they stationed sentries so that Israel would not make the pilgrimage to the Temple.

Verse 2

The extent of their straying they have deepened The extent of their straying they have deepened. I said that anyone who does not go up to Jerusalem on the Pilgrimage festivals transgresses a positive commandment, and they decreed that anyone who does go up to Jerusalem

shall be put to death. Hence, they went deeper than I. I.e., they were more stringent than I (Sanhedrin 102a). The word שַׁחֲטָה, translated as 'extent' is an expression similar to שְׁחוּט זָהָב, "malleable gold" (I Kings 10:16) stretched and spun. Jonathan, however, renders it as an expression of slaughtering sacrifices to idols.
and I [will bring] chastisement to all of them Lit. And I too will chastise them with torments, I will prepare chastisement for all of them.

Verse 3

for now you have committed harlotry, O Ephraim Until Hosea son of Elah, they blamed their sins on their kings, who prevented them from going on the pilgrimages. This one arose and abolished the sentries; yet they did not go up. Therefore, they were exiled. For now you have committed harlotry, O Ephraim, and they cannot blame the king. I learned this in Seder Olam (ch. 22).

Verse 4

They do not abandon their deeds Heb. יִתְּנוּ, lit. give. They do not abandon their evil way. Comp. (Gen. 31:7) "And God did not allow him (נְתָנוֹ)"; (Num. 21:23) "And Sihon did not permit (נָתַן)"; (Song 1:12) "abandoned (נָתַן) its fragrance."

Verse 5

And the pride of Israel shall be humbled Heb. וְעָנָה. Jonathan renders: And the pride of Israel shall be humbled. Comp. (Exodus 10:13) "to humble yourself (לְעָנוֹת) from before Me." An expression of poverty and humility.
before them Jonathan renders: and they see. And Dunash ben Livrat explained it (וְעָנָה) as an expression of testimony; when their retribution comes to them, the pride and haughtiness, which they were haughty, and transgressing My will, will testify against them and before them. [from Teshuvoth Dunash, p.79]

Verse 6

With their flocks and with their cattle With their sacrifices.
He has withdrawn Heb. זָר, slipped away. Comp. (II Sam. 2:21) "and take to yourself his clothing (חֲלִצָתוֹ)," the clothing that you will slip off them.

Verse 7

for they begot strange children for they intermarried among the nations.
a month shall consume them The month of Av.

Verse 8

Sound a shofar so that they take care to beware of the sword of the troops that will come upon them.
shout [in] Beth-aven "After you the troop is coming, you Benjamin!" You shall shout this in Beth-aven. Jonathan, however, renders: Sound a shofar: [O prophets, raise your voices like a shofar.] The news of the sword which is coming as retribution for the iniquity of crowning Saul, who was in Gibeah, and for disobeying Samuel, who was from Ramah. And their kings caused them to turn away from following Me, such as Jeroboam and his ilk. Shout over them, "Violence and great destruction!"
"After you, Benjamin!" Since you delayed and hesitated to go on the pilgrimages to the Temple, which is in Benjamin's territory.

Because of your delay of Benjamin. [explaining according to Targum Jonathan]

Verse 9

shall be bewildered on the day of contention When I come to debate with them, they will be bewildered and will wonder, and they will have no answer in their mouth. Why? Because, among the tribes of Israel I made known a true Torah, and they transgressed it. [Another explanation:] Ephraim shall be bewildered etc. among the tribes of Israel I made known a true [judgment] Said Rabbi Abahu in the name of Rabbi Yose bar Chanina. On the day that the Holy One, blessed be He, debates with them in judgment, they will not be able to open their mouths, for among their tribes I made known that the judgment is a true judgment. You find that, when the ten tribes were exiled, Benjamin and Judah were not exiled, and the ten tribes were saying, Because they are the dwellers of His palace, He did not exile them. There is favoritism in this matter. God forbid, there is no favoritism, but their measure of sin was not yet full. As soon as they sinned, they were exiled. Then the ten tribes were bewildered, without an answer in their mouths, and they said, "Behold God! Behold the Mighty One! Behold the Just One! For even to those who dwell in His house He shows no favoritism." This is to fulfill what is stated: Among the tribes of Israel I made known a true judgment. [from Lam. Rabbah, Proem 6]

Verse 10

like those who remove the landmark As a person who attaches the landmark of his neighbor, so did they hasten to grasp the ways of Israel, their colleagues, the kings. Therefore, "upon them will I pour My wrath like water." And, according to its apparent meaning, they were stealing fields. But it is difficult to me, since he should have written. מַסִּיגֵי גְּבוּל, those who remove the landmark, not כְּמַסִּיגֵי like those who remove.

Verse 11

Ephraim is plundered in the hands of the nations.
broken by judgment Chastised with torments. Now why does he suffer with all this? Because he wished and desired and followed the new commands of the prophets of Baal.

Verse 12

and like decay A worm which eats the wood and pulverizes it.

Verse 13

his pain Heb. מָזוֹרוֹ, an expression of illness.
and Ephraim went to Assyria This is Hosea son of Elah, who was his vassal and then rebelled against him (II Kings 17:4).
and he sent i.e., Judah sent.
to the king of Yarev This refers to Ahaz, who gave a bribe to Tiglath-pileser to assist him against Rezin the king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah (II Kings 16:8).
but he will not be able to heal you from the many bands of Philistines and Arabs that attacked Ahaz, as is related in Chronicles (II 28:21): "For Ahaz divided the house of the Lord etc. and he gave it to the king of Assyria, but he did not help him."
and he will not remove the pain from you Heb. וְלֹא יִגְהֶה מִכֶּם מָזוֹר. And I say that it is one of the words whose radicals are transposed. This is an

expression similar to (II Sam. 20:13) “When he was removed (הוּגָה) from the highway”; (Isaiah 59:13) “sprouting and giving forth (והוֹגוֹ) from the heart”; (Prov. 25:4), “take away (הָגוֹ) the dross from the silver.”

Verse 14

I will carry off and no one will rescue I will carry off the prey.

Verse 15

I will go away I will withdraw from them and return to the heaven.
until they admit their guilt i. e., until they consider themselves guilty, to confess their guilt.
they will seek Me Heb. יְשַׁחֲרֻנְנִי.

Chapter 6

Verse 1

Come and let us return They will say, “Come and let us return etc.”
He smites, and He will bind us up Heb. וְיַ. It is a present tense. He smites us, and He will bind us up.

Verse 2

He will revive us from the two days He will strengthen us from the two retributions which have passed over us from the two sanctuaries that were destroyed.
on the third day With the construction of the third Temple, He will set us up.
from the two days From the two times that have passed over us.
on the third day In the third time.

Verse 3

to know the Lord truly and wholeheartedly, as sure as the dawn, whose going forth is sure.
and He will come to us like rain Like rain which comes to be life for the world, for then He will come to teach life that will come to us.
which satisfies the earth Heb. יוֹרֶה אֶרֶץ.

Verse 4

What shall I do for you because of the Divine Standard of Justice; how can I bring out your verdicts to the light?
For your loving-kindness is like a morning cloud All your goodness and your righteousness is naught.

Verse 5

Because I have hewed by the prophets Heb. עַל-כֵּן. Because I hewed My words upon them through the prophets, but they did not take heed, therefore... I have put them to death because of the words of My mouth Because of the words of My mouth. So did Jonathan translate it.
Because Heb. עַל-כֵּן. Like עַל אֲשֶׁר, because of that which. Comp. (Gen. 33:10) “Because (כִּי עַל-כֵּן) I saw your face”; (ibid. 27:36) “because (כִּי עַל-כֵּן) I did not give her to Shelah my son.”

now will your verdicts come out to the light? This is a question. Now how will I be able to show you favoritism before the Divine Standard of Justice? This is a continuation of "What shall I do for you?"

Verse 6

and knowledge of God I desire more than burnt offerings.

Verse 7

like Adam Heb. כְּאָדָם, like the first man.
there they betrayed Me In a good land where I settled them, there they betrayed Me, like Adam, whom I brought into the Garden of Eden, and he transgressed My commandment. [from Gen. Rabbah 19:9]

Verse 8

who lurk to shed blood Heb. עֲקֻבָּה. Full of people who lurk to murder. Comp. (Jos. 8:13) "and their lyers in wait (עָקְבוֹ)"; (Gen. 27:36) "and he deceived me (וַיַּעְקְבֵנִי)."

Verse 9

And as a man gathers fish, so do bands Heb. וּכְחַכֵּי. And as a fisherman gathers fish, who gathers them with a fishhook together, so do bands gather. Companies of their priests, who gather to go on the road, will all murder there in one group.
for they devised a plot For this is a plot which they plotted prior to their gathering, to which place they would go to murder and to loot. וּכְחַכֵּי means ajjmedours in O.F, fishermen. And also in mishnaic Hebrew, חַכֵּי is an expression of joining. The Gemara states (Baba Kamma 119b): "And he shall not put into it more than three חֻכִּין." Those are the stitches with which the comber joins together both ends of the garment when he beats it with sticks. This [following] interpretation is mine, and it seems appropriate, and this is the explanation: And when there is a group of five men gathering together, it is a company of priests to murder. The first one is that of Rabbi Meir Sheliach Zibbur o.b.m.
in one group Heb. שֻׁכְמָה, an expression of one group.

Verse 10

a horrible thing Heb. שַׁעֲרוּרִיָּה. Jonathan renders this as an expression of change, for they changed their way, and so: (Jer. 5:20) "an appalling and horrible thing (שַׁעֲרוּרָה)."

Verse 11

Judah, too Since they sinned.
appointed Heb. שָׁת. The appointer appointed a time for retribution for her.
harvest The time of her leaving and her exile. Comp. "A little more time and the time of harvest shall come to her," in reference to the retribution of Babylon, in the Book of Jeremiah (51:33).
when I will return the backsliding of My people When I admonish them to return from their backsliding.
the backsliding of My people Heb. שְׁבוּת, an expression of the straying of youth and childhood, anwejjsdoure in O.F. Comp. (Jer. 3:14) "backsliding children (שׁוֹבָבִים)"; (ibid. 31:21) "backsliding daughter (הַבַּת הַשּׁוֹבָבָה)."

Chapter 7

Verse 1

When I would heal Israel When I wish to save them and heal them, their iniquities are revealed before Me, for they constantly commit falsehood, and thieves come constantly from them and steal their neighbors' property, and also their bands spread out with lawlessness, to rob the people.

Verse 2

They do not say in their heart They do not lay it up to their heart that all their evil is inscribed before Me as a remembrance.

Verse 3

they make the king glad Their king desires the evil that they do.

Verse 4

like an oven heated by the baker that was heated by the baker, so does their lust burn within them.
he rests from awakening Heb. יְשֵׁבוּת מֵעִיר. Jonathan translated what he translated: I cannot reconcile it with the wording of the verse, and, according to its apparent meaning, their temptation, which arouses them, rests.
from the kneading the dough until it leavens From the time he thinks of the evil in his heart, how he will do it, he rests and sleeps until morning, when he can do it, just as the baker rests from the kneading of the dough until it leavens, when he can bake it. And so it is stated in Micah (2: 1): "Woe is to those who plan iniquity and work evil on their beds; when the morning lights up, they do it."

Verse 5

The day of our king The day we crown our king.
the princes became ill Our princes became ill.
from the heat of the wine From the heat of the wine which burns within them, and the king withdraws his hand from the good and proper people to join the scorners.

Verse 6

For they have made ready their heart like an oven with their ambush They prepared and readied their heart with their ambush, like an oven which they prepare and heat in order to bake.
all night their baker sleeps Their baker, who heats the oven after they have prepared their heart and have thought of the execution of the evil, how they would do it.
their baker sleeps i.e., until morning they sleep, and in the morning they burn like fire until they consummate their evil.

Verse 7

and they devour their judges They slew their Sanhedrin because they protested against them, and what happened to them? All their kings have fallen because "none of them calls to me." And in the Palestinian Talmud in tractate Avodah Zarah (1:1) it is expounded as follows: On the day

they crowned Jeroboam, “the princes became ill from the heat of wine” as is explained. They came to him and said to him, “Get up! Make idols for us.” He replied, “Now is the time of evening, and all the people are drinking”; i.e., it is a time of drunkenness. Perhaps now you are drunk, and tomorrow you will recant. “Go and return in the morning.” They went and returned in the morning. That is what is written: “For they have made ready etc.” He said to them, “I fear your Sanhedrin.” They replied, “We will kill them.” I.e. what is written: “And they devour their judges.” “He draws his hand etc.” When he saw a righteous man, he would seat two scorners next to him, and they would say to him, “Which generation was the most beloved of all generations?” And he would reply, “The generation of the desert.” And they would say to him, “Did they not worship idols?” And he would reply, “Since they were beloved, they were not punished.” And they would say to him, “Quiet! The king wants to do that.”

Verse 8

mingles He will mingle in exile with the nations.
as a cake which was not turned over Jonathan renders: as a cake which, before being turned over, was consumed. עֻגָה is a cake which they bake on the coals.

Verse 9

but he did not know He did not lay it up to his heart that the kings of Aram consumed him in the days of Jehoahaz, as it is said: (II Kings 13:7) “For he had not left to Jehoahaz etc. and made them like dust to trample.” Nonetheless, Jeroboam his son did not repent of his father’s evil.
also weakness was cast Heb. שֵׂיבָה, lit. ripe old age. Jonathan rendered. Also weakness reached them, but they did not contemplate it.

Verse 10

And the pride of Israel was humbled before Him Heb. וְעָנָה. And the glory of Israel was humbled and they saw; an expression of humility, and this is not a future tense but a past tense. Comp. (Isa. 6: 3) “And one called (וְקָרָא) to the other.” I heard that one called to the other. Also (Gen. 37:3) “and he made (וְעָשָׂה) for him a woolen shirt.” This too is a past tense. They have already been diminished and humbled, and, despite this, they did not return to the Lord.

Verse 11

without a heart to discern between what was good for them and what was bad for them.
they called upon Egypt To those who have always harmed them, they call for aid.
they went to Assyria They went to the king of Assyria that he should aid them.

Verse 12

When they go to Egypt.
I will spread My net over them; like the fowl of the heaven For the eagle and the hawk ascend higher than he and they bring them down to the earth, so will I bring them down in Egypt through Nebuchadnezzar. Another explanation: like the fowl of the heaven that is caught in a net hung on poles, and after they are in the net, they bring down the net.

I will chastise them as I let their congregation hear I will bring chastisements upon them according to all that I let them hear through Jeremiah the prophet, that they are destined to say to him (42:2-6) "And pray in our behalf etc. And let the Lord your God tell etc. Whether good or bad etc." And he said to them (verse 15f.), "If you direct your faces to come to Egypt etc. the sword that you fear will overtake you there," and the entire section.
I will chastise them Heb. אַיְסְרֵם, an expression of chastisements (יִסּוּרִין) and Menahem (Machbereth Menahem pp. 128f.) explained [it as] an expression of binding. Comp. (Jer. 30:8) "and I will break your thongs (מוֹסְרוֹתָיו)," but Dunash (Teshuvoth Dunash p. 34) interpreted [it as] an expression of chastisements (יִסּוּרִין). Comp. (Lev. 26:18) "to chastise you (לְיַסְּרָה)." And the second "yud" in אַיְסְרֵם is added, as it is added in (יְיַשְּׁרוּ) (Prov. 4:25) "and your eyelids look straight (יְיַשְּׁרוּ) ahead of you."

Verse 13

I would redeem them I wanted to redeem them from the evil in which they are [found].
but they spoke lies about Me They said to Jeremiah, (Jer. 43:2) "You speak falsely; the Lord our God did not send you to say, 'You shall not come to Egypt.'"

Verse 14

therefore, they will wail on their beds Because, therefore, a wail will come to them. So did Jonathan render it.
they store up They have many granaries of corn; therefore, they turn away and rebel against Me.

Verse 15

But I chastised them, I strengthened their arms with My fear, through My prophets, to hearken to them with what they were chastising them, and their arms would be strengthened.

Verse 16

They will return, but to no avail Heb. עָל. They returned to Egypt, but it did not avail them. Therefore, עָל is vowelized with a "kamatz." Comp. (II Sam. 23:1) "The word of the man raised up high (עָל)," which is an expression of raising up and is not attached to the following word.
they were like a deceitful bow which, when one wishes to shoot with it toward the north, shoots toward the south.
their princes shall fall by the sword Jonathan son of Kareah and all the officers of the armies who returned to Egypt.
from the fury of their tongue The harsh language with which they replied to Jeremiah.
This is their derision which they will deride them in the land of Egypt. Why have you returned to us to bring retribution upon us? Is it not written concerning you," (Ex. 14:13) "You shall no longer continue to see them"?

Chapter 8

Verse 1

To your palate a shophar The Shechinah says to the prophet: Let the voice of your palate be heard, and call like a shophar, and say: You enemies! Fly and hasten as the eagle swoops and come to the house of the Lord. To your palate a shophar, it is as though a shophar is placed to your palate. [after Jonathan]

Verse 2

To Me...will cry when evil befalls them...
"My God! We know You" Are we not Your people? Transpose it and interpret it. Israel will cry to Me, "My God! We know You!" But I will not heed them, for...

Verse 3

Israel has cast off the Good One Therefore, the enemy shall pursue him.

Verse 4

they removed Heb. הֶשְׁירוּ, they set up princes (שָׂרִים). Another explanation: [הֶשְׁירוּ is like הֶסִירוּ, they removed,] they removed this one from the throne and crowned this one, and in the book of the Masorah, this is proven, for he classified it in the Masorah of those written with a "shin" and read as a "samech," bearing the meaning of the "samech."
in order that it be cut off For they had much gold, and they caused for them that the wealth be cut off from them.

Verse 5

He has forsaken The Holy One, blessed be He, has forsaken you, children of Samaria, for the iniquity of the calves in Bethel, where the kings of Israel worship.
how long will they be unable to empty their hearts to be cleansed of that filth.

Verse 6

For it is from Israel From each one's silver and gold it was collected, and the craftsman made it. And the "vav" of וְהוּא is superfluous, and there are many like it, e.g. (Ezekiel 47:11), "Its swamps and its pools shall not become healthy (וְלֹא יֵרָפְאוּ)." Here too, for its preparation is from Israel and it is made. And this "vav" may be reconciled in the following manner: כִּי מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וְהוּא Also, this calf came from them like the first calf.
splinters Heb. שְׁבָבִים, Jonathan renders: splinters of boards, and it is an Aramaic expression. cf. שִׁיבָא מְכַשּׁוּרָא (Sanhedrin 7b), a splinter of a beam.

Verse 7

it has no standing grain Their seed has no standing grain; i.e., they will not prosper with their deeds.
if it does produce Even if it produces flour.
strangers will swallow it Even if they prosper with their property, it will eventually fall into the hands of strangers.

Verse 8

Verse 9

a wild donkey secluded to himself He became like a wild donkey that goes alone to itself, sniffing air from place to place to wander.
they paid hire for love Heb. הִתְנוּ. Jonathan interprets it as an expression of a dragon; like this dragon that goes through the deserts. They sniffed the air like the dragon to acquire for themselves lovers, strange paramours. הִתְנוּ, endragonיrיnt in O.F., like the tremors of the nostrils of a dragon, [derived from תַּנִּין. According to this derivation we render: dragonlike, they sought lovers.] It may also be explained as an expression of hire.

Verse 10

Although they pay hire among the nations Although they did this, that they paid for lovers of the nations.
now I will gather them When the time of their redemption arrives, I will not delay it.
and they will be humbled a little from the burden of the king and the princes And they will be humbled a little in their exile from the fear of the burden of the king and the princes, i.e. from the yoke of the kings of the nations among whom they were.

Verse 11

For Ephraim has increased Therefore, I will humble them with the burden of the king and the princes.

Verse 12

I write for them I constantly reprimand them through My prophets, and write for them the great things of My Law, but they are considered a strange thing.

Verse 13

As for the sacrifices they burn before Me Heb. זִבְחֵי הַבְהָבַי. The sacrifice of My burnt offerings that they scorch in the fire which is upon My altar.
let them slaughter the flesh and eat [it] Why do I need them to bring them? Let them slaughter so that they have flesh to eat and eat them, for I do not desire them.

Chapter 9

Verse 1

Rejoice not, O Israel like the other peoples, for they did not receive a Torah, and they did not come to My lot, but you strayed from Me and lost many benefits.
you love to be like a harlot, to receive a harlot’s hire.
on all threshing floors of corn In the manner of the harlot to whom they give corn on the threshing floor for her hire. [after Gen. Rabbah 57:4]

Verse 2

Verse 3

They shall not stay in the land of the Lord Heb. יֵשְׁבוּ, they shall not stay in their land.

Verse 4

They shall not pour libations Heb. יִסְכוּ, an expression of נֶסֶךְ, libation.
they will not please Him Their offering will not be pleasant to Him.
like bread of mourners Heb. אוֹנִים, like bread of robbery that comes through strength and might.
for their bread is for themselves It is fit for them for food, but not to come into the house of the Lord. Another explanation is: אוֹנִים, like bread of mourners, which is contaminated, and the end of the verse proves it: all those who partake thereof become contaminated.

Verse 5

for the appointed day For the day of the set time for the enemy to be appointed to come upon you.
the Lord's massacre Heb. גֶּזַח, a slaughter, the killing which I have in you.

Verse 6

For behold, they have gone away from their place because of the many plunderers who will come upon them with Nebuchadnezzar.
Moph shall bury them It is of the land of Egypt.
the treasurehouses for their silver The houses of the precious treasures of their silver.
thistles etc. briers Heb. קִמּוֹשׁ חוֹחַ. Jonathan renders these terms as species of beasts.

Verse 7

the visitation When your sins will be visited.
recompense the payment of sins.
the prophet shall be a fool Even some of their true prophets will be fools, e.g. Hananiah son of Azzur, who was originally a true prophet.
and the hatred is great which the Holy One, blessed be He, hates your deeds.

Verse 8

Ephraim is a prophet with my God They set up for themselves their prophets, who attract them toward their idolatry.
[for the] prophet [they lay] a fowler's snare on all his ways And for the true prophet they conceal snares to trap them.
[causing] hatred in the house of his God In the Temple they assassinated Zechariah (II Chron. 24:21), and they sought to assassinate Jeremiah, according to the matter that is stated: (Jer. 26: 11) "This man is liable to death etc."

Verse 9

as in the days of Gibeah Some say that this is Gibeah of Benjamin in the case of the concubine (Jud. 19), and some say that this is Gibeah of Saul, where they asked for a king and rebelled against the words of the prophet (I Sam. 15).

Verse 10

Like grapes in the desert Like grapes, which are precious in the desert, so did I love Israel.
like a ripe fig Heb. כְּבִכּוּרָה, like a ripe fig. on a fig tree Heb. בְּתְאֵנָה.
in its beginning In the beginning of the ripening of the figs.
I saw your forefathers So did your forefathers appear in My eyes to love them.
and they separated themselves Heb. וַיִּנָּזְרוּ. Nowhere is נָזִיר anything but an expression of separation.
to a shameful thing To the deity, Baal-peor, which is their shame.
and they became detestable before Me.
when they loved the daughters of Moab.

Verse 11

As for Ephraim their honor shall fly away like a bird etc. Said the prophet: If only they would be like a bird that wanders from its nest and ceases to multiply, so should they be bereft of their seed, either at the time of birth, or that it should disintegrate and they should miscarry, or at the time of conception that they should not conceive, for what use is it that they raise their children, since, if they raise them, I will bereave them before they become men.

Verse 12

for woe... also Woe to the fathers.
when I turn away from them Heb. בָּשׁוּרִי, like בְּסוּרִי, when I turn away from them. This is one of the words listed in the Masorah, which are spelled with a "sin" but read with a "sammech." Another explanation: their honor shall fly away like a bird etc. Like this bird which flies away and is no more, so will their honor fly away and flee, all that they toiled with their children in birth, [in the womb,] and in conception. From birth This refers to the birth pangs. and from the womb This refers to the days of pregnancy. and from conception At the time of coitus. All this toil of theirs will end. How so? For, when they raise their children, I will bereave them.

Verse 13

Ephraim, as I saw Tyre in its tranquility, enjoying royalty and wealth more than all the provinces, so did I see Ephraim, planted in a dwelling place. But Ephraim what recompense did he recompense Me? He occupied himself with taking his children out to the slayer, to slaughter them in worship of the idols. So did Jonathan translate.

Verse 14

Give them, O Lord, what You will give The prophet prays that they should die when young, for the mourning for a child is not as bad as the mourning for an adult. Therefore, if it is impossible that they die from birth, from the womb, or from conception, for it was already decreed from the Creation of the world, (Gen. 3: 16) "And to your husband shall be your longing," give them quickly in their childhood what you say to give to them after a time, for You said, "For, if they raise their children. I will bereave them." [from Pesikta Rabbathi 45:3]
give them a bereaving womb When they emerge into the world (lit. the air of the world), let them die or let their mother's breasts dry up so that they will have no milk to nurse them.

Verse 15

All their evil is in Gilgal There they worshipped idols to a great extent (on high places absent in mss.). Since the mishkan was there first, the prophets of Baal would tell them that was a choice site, and it belonged to the kings of Israel.
I will not continue to love them Heb. לֹא אוֹסֵף אַהֲבָתָם, lit. I will not continue their love.

Verse 16

they shall not produce fruit It is not good for them to multiply, for, even if they bear children, I will slay the precious ones of their womb.

Verse 17

My God shall reject them This is not a curse but a report. He is destined to reject them.

Chapter 10

Verse 1

Israel is a vine devoid of fruit fitting for it Israel resembles a vine that casts off all its good fruit. So did they forsake Me, Who is the good and fitting fruit for them.
fruit fitting for it The fruit that is fitting for them and good for them.
When I increased their good, they increased for the altars When I lavished good upon them, they made many calves for the altars. Another explanation Israel is a plundered vine; the produce of their deeds brought it about to them. פֵּרֵי יְשַׁוֶּה לוֹ means 'will avail them' to be plundered, for they made the altars and availed their nation for evil. This is the wording of the Targum.
they increased pillars Heb. הֵטִיבוּ מַצֵּבוֹת.

Verse 2

Their heart has parted from Me.
now they shall be desolate. That is the thing that shall demolish (וְעָרְפוּ) thier altars, i.e., it will destroy them. This is an expression similar to (Deut. 21:4) "and they shall dehead (יַעֲרֹף)"; (Ex. 13:13) "and you shall behead it (וְעָרַפְתּוֹ)." He will break their neck. Another explanation according to Midrash Aggadah: Peace is great, for, even if Israel worships idols, but there is peace among them, Satan does not bring charges against them, as it is said: (above 4:17) "Ephraim is joined: although he worships idols, let him alone." Strife, however, is hated, as it is said: "Their heart has parted; now they will be guilty." Satan can open his mouth to bring charges. [from unknown Midrashic source]

Verse 3

For now when evil befalls them. they shall say, We have no king, Our king, upon whom we relied, saying, "He will go forth at our head and will wage our wars," is of no avail to us.

Verse 4

swearing falsely Heb. אָלוֹת שָׁוְא, swearing falsely. אָלוֹת is, in construction, like כָּרֹת, a present tense. forming a covenant with pagan worship. Therefore, judgment of torments and retribution shall spring up upon them. like hemlock which is a bitter grass, springing up on the furrows of the field. And Jonathan renders: on the furrows of the field for the iniquity that they move back the boundaries of the field.
the furrows Heb. תַּלְמֵי. The furrow of a plowshare is called תֶּלֶם. Another explanation: on the furrows of the field where they erect their altars, as it is said (below 12:12): "like heaps on the furrows of the field." There the judgment for their iniquity shall spring up on them. Another explanation: swearing falsely Every covenant they form with one another they break. and...shall spring up like hemlock which springs up on the furrows of the field, which is a bitter grass, so do their judgments spring up and bitterness grows for the poor and needy. Amos, too, says: (6:12) "For you have turned judgment into hemlock."

Verse 5

Because of the calves of Beth-aven etc. Because of the retribution destined to befall the calves in Bethel, called Beth-aven in the Book of Joshua (7:2).
shall be frightened Heb. יָגוּרוּ. Its neighbors who were in Samaria shall be frightened over it. Why? For its people mourn over it, and its priests, who would constantly rejoice over it will not mourn over its glory, for it has been exiled.

Verse 6

That too shall be carried off to Assyria This took place in the twelfth year of Ahaz, "And the Lord (sic) aroused the desire of Pul king of Assyria...and they exiled the Reubenites and the Gadites etc." (I Chron. 5:26), and he took the golden calves that were in Bethel and went away, to fulfill what was said: "That too shall be carried off to Assyria." [from Seder Olam ch. 22]
a gift to King Yareb This is Sennacherib.
Ephraim shall take shame Heb. בָּשְׁנָה. Jeroboam, who was from the tribe of Ephraim, shall take shame for himself, that he erected this calf for a deity.
and Israel shall be ashamed of that counsel that they took counsel to make them, as it is said: (I Kings 12:28) "The king took counsel and made two golden calves."

Verse 7

The king of Samaria is silenced Heb. נִדְמָה. The king of Samaria is silenced, and he is like foam on the surface of the water, which is eskoume (ecume) in Old French.

Verse 8

The high places of Aven i.e., the high places of Bethel.
thorns and thistles shall come up on their altars for their worshippers have gone into exile, and no one turns to them anymore.
and they shall say i.e., Israel shall say.
to the mountains, Cover us up lest our enemies see our shame.

Verse 9

Since the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, O Israel! Heb. חָטָאתָ. This word חָטָאת is punctuated weakly, since it is of the feminine gender and of the

past tense. Comp. (Lev. 25:21) וְעָשָׂת, "and it shall produce"; (Gen. 16:8) בָּאת, "have you come"; (Deut. 32:36) אָזְלַת, "their power is gone." From the days of Gibeah of Benjamin, Israel sinned. Since the incident of the concubine in Gibeah (Jud. 19) took place during the time of Othniel the son of Kenaz, who was the first of the judges, at the time of Cushan-rishathaim, and in whose time the image of Micah existed, and all this we find in Seder Olam (ch. 12).
There they remained They adhered to that trait since then.
the battle...did not overtake them in Gibeah Since the iniquity of idolatry was with them and they were not concerned about it, they were not victorious in the battle of Gibeah against the Benjaminites. Scripture calls them בְּנֵי עַלְוָה, lit. sons of haughtiness, who made themselves superior (עֲלִיוֹנִים) and did not heed their brethren to deliver the people of Gibeah. Jonathan, however, translates this in reference to their request for a king and their crowning Saul. However this does not appear to me to follow the Hebrew wording. Moreover, the context fits the former interpretation.

Verse 10

With My will, I chastised them According to My will, I always chastised them from judge to judge, and I delivered them into the hands of their plunderers.
and nations shall gather about them, when they bind them to their two eyes Since Hosea compares them to a heifer as stated further: "Ephraim is a goaded heifer," he, therefore, compared their chastisement to a cow, which they tire with plowing and they bind it to the yoke of the plowshare, and the pegs of the yoke penetrate it, [i.e., they penetrate the yoke,] one on this side and one on that side, next to the ox's two eyes. And so did Jonathan render: as one hinds a "padna" on its two eyes. "Padna" is a yoke of oxen.

Verse 11

And Ephraim is a goaded heifer Heb. מְלֻמָּדָה, porpojjnte in O.F. punctured, wounded in many places with the oxgoad, which is called agojjlon in O.F. I.e., many chastisements have I brought upon her, yet she has not humbled herself, and he always loves to thresh the grain in a place of food and fat, and she did not subject herself to be plowing, i.e., they did not subject themselves to My Torah, but follow the vision of their heart.
that loves Heb. אֹהֲבָתִּי. The "yud" is superfluous. Comp. (Gen. 31: 39) "stolen by day (גְּנֻבָתִי)."
and I passed over her fair neck Therefore, I bring upon them kings who will weaken their strength.
I will cause Ephraim to ride, Judah shall plow etc. If you wish that I would cause Ephraim to ride upon the nations, Judah shall plow, and Jacob יְשַׂדֵּד, shall break his clods with a plowing of good deeds, as Hosea explains and says: plow yourselves a plowing etc.

Verse 12

Sow righteousness for yourselves But you have plowed wickedness etc.; therefore, a tumult shall rise in your people.
plow yourselves a plowing Engage in the Torah and from there you will learn to go on the good way, to overpower temptation, like a person who plows the field to turn over the roots of grasses which sap the strength of the grain in the summer many days prior to sowing, and you shall set aside a time to seek the Lord, i.e., for the study of the Torah.
until He comes and instructs you in righteousness When you toil in it, He will give you to understand to let you know its secrets with

righteousness. Another explanation: Plow yourselves a plowing Do good deeds before oppression comes upon you, and that will cause for you that your prayer will be accepted in time of necessity, and then it will be a time fit for you to seek the Holy One, blessed he He, for all your necessities, for then your cry will be heard, and He will cast down (יוֹרֶה) charity to you; i.e., He will rain down charity to you. Comp. (Ex. 15:3) "He cast (יָרָה) into the sea."

Verse 13

you have eaten fruit of lies You have received the retribution for your deeds.

Verse 14

And a tumult shall rise in your peoples i.e., a voice shouting, "Flee! Flee!"
as the plunder of a peaceful people by an ambush Like plunderers who come upon a tranquil people suddenly with an ambush, for they did not beware of them to flee from before them, and they plunder everything.
an ambush Heb. בֵּית אַרְבֵּאל. Jonathan renders: a place of ambush (בֵּית מַאֲרָב), and the "aleph" "lammed" are superfluous. Comp. יִזְרְעֶאל, which is not the name of a city, e.g., (above 2: 24) "And they shall answer Jezreel," and he called it with the expression of a name. Here, too, he called it as a sort of name. In this manner, Menahem (Machbereth Menahem p. 34) classified it, but Dunash (Teshuvoth Dunash p. 49) interprets it as a placename.
was dashed to pieces Heb. רֻטָּשָׁה, split. Comp. (Isa. 13:18) "shall dash (תְּרַטַּשְׁנָא) youths"; (ibid. v. 16) "and their babes shall be dashed (יְרֻטָּשׁוּ)." Another explanation of רֻטָּשָׁה is "abandoned," like נֶטֶשׁ.

Verse 15

So has Bethel done to you The calf in Bethel has brought about all this retribution upon you.
the evil of your wickedness Heb., lit. the evil of your evil. Because of the evil of your wickedness, the sins of your evil intention.
at dawn the king of Israel has been silenced Heb. נִדְמָה נִדְמָה. He has sunk into a deep sleep as though it were night; i.e. he has no strength. Now why has all this come about? For when Israel was young, devoid of all good, I loved him.

Chapter 11

Verse 1

and from Egypt I called My son through My prophets to cleave to My Torah. But what did they do?...

Verse 2

The more they called to them, the more they went away from them As much as the prophets call to teach them the good way, so did they turn their backs to run away from them.
and they would slaughter sacrifices to the baalim. It is customary Scripture to speak in this manner. Comp. (above 4:7) "The more they have increased, the more they have sinned against Me"; (Ex. 1:12) "And the more they afflicted them, the more they increased."

Verse 3

But I sent to train Ephraim, he took them etc. I sent a leader before them who would train them gently.
he took them on his arms This is Moses, concerning whom it is stated (Num. 11:12): "As the nursing father carries the sucking child."
The form תִּרְגַּלְתִּי is like הִרְגַּלְתִּי, I trained, or accustomed, and there is no similar form in Scripture.
but they did not know that I healed them They, in fact, knew, but they trod with their heels; they pretended not to know. The Aggadah in the Midrash of Rabbi Tanhuma (Gen. 48:1) expounds it in reference to the sons of Joseph. When he brought them before Jacob to bless them, Jacob perceived wicked men destined to come from Ephraim, viz. Jeroboam and Ahab, and the Holy Spirit left him, "and he said: Who are these?" Joseph prayed for mercy, and the Holy Spirit rested on Jacob and he blessed them. This is the meaning of: And I trained My spirit upon Jacob for Ephraim's benefit, and he took them on his arms.

Verse 4

with cords of a man I constantly drew them with tender cords with which a man draws his son; i.e., drawing mercifully. Jonathan, too, rendered it in this manner.
and I was to them like those who lift the yoke on their bridles I.e., like the good farmers who lift the yoke with their hands through bridles to lighten it for the cow that is plowing. So was I with them in every trouble, to make it lighter for them. Another explanation: like those who lift the yoke on their bridles Like the farmers who lift the yoke off the neck of the cow or the ox by lengthening the peg upon which the yoke is placed, to lighten it for the plowing cow. So was I with them in every trouble to make it lighter for them. So did Jonathan render it: like a good farmer [who makes it lighter for the shoulders of the oxen and lengthens their bridles.]
on their bridles Heb. אוּכִיל, an expression of a stake of an alley.
and I extended to him the ability to bear I extended him the strength to bear the yoke of the torments. Jonathan renders: referring to His supplying them food in the desert.

Verse 5

He shall not return to the land of Egypt I promised him (Ex. 14:13): "you shall no longer continue to see them etc." Now what did it avail? Against his will, Assyria is his king. They sinned and brought about that they should be vassals to Assyria since they refused to repent.

Verse 6

And a sword shall rest in his cities Heb. וְחָלָה, and a sword shall rest in his cities.
and it shall destroy his branches, and it shall consume And it shall destroy his mighty men and consume them. [after Targum Jonathan]
because of their counsels (all these came upon them.) The word מִמֹּעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם is punctuated by two accents: it contains a tipcha and it contains a silluk (sof passuk), since it is a clause by itself. Comp. (Lev. 21:4) לְהֵחַלּוֹ, "for him to become profaned," of the verse commencing, "A husband shall not contaminate himself." Similarly, (Ex. 30:31) לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם, "to your generations," of the verse dealing with the holy anointing oil.

Verse 7

And My people waver whether to return to Me When the prophets teach them to return to Me, they are in doubt whether to return or not to return; it is with difficulty that they return to Me.
and to the matter concerning which they call them, together they do not uphold it And to the matter concerning which the prophets call them, together My people will not uphold it and will not agree to do it. Some explain וְאֶל-עַל יִקְרָאֻהוּ to mean: Harsh happenings shall befall them. The word וְאֶל means the same as (Gen. 31:29) "My hand has power (לְאֵל)," [and the word עַל means the same as עֲלִילוֹת, deeds (Kara). But this is not so since אֶל is vowelized with a "pattah." [I.e. with a "segol," called "pattah katan" by the early grammarians.] Were אֶל a noun, it would be vowelized with a "tseireh," [i.e., אֵל]. Jonathan, however, renders: A harsh happening will befall them. He interprets וְאֶל as an expression of harshness, but it appears to me that I have interpreted it properly.
together they do not uphold [it] [Jonathan renders:] Together they shall not walk erect.

Verse 8

deliver you Heb. אֲמַגֶּנְךָ. Comp. (Gen. 14:20) "Who delivered (מִגֵּן) your adversaries."
My remorse has been kindled Heb. נִכְרְחוּ, are heated. This is an Aramaic expression. Comp. (Lam. 5:10) "Our skin is heated (נִכְמָרוּ) like an oven."

Verse 9

I will not return from My good word, which I said. (Lev. 26:44) "I have not rejected them nor have I abhorred them," to destroy Ephraim.
for I am God Who keeps His favorable word, and I do not retract the good.
I will not enter a city I.e., another city. I have already promised to cause My Shechinah to rest in your midst in Jerusalem, and I will never again cause it to rest on another city. Others explain it as an expression of hatred. Comp. (I Sam. 28:16) "And has become your adversary (וַיְהִי עָרְךָ)."

Verse 10

He shall roar like a lion He will yet roar to them like a lion that they leave the exile and follow Him.
and the children shall hasten from the west And the exiles shall be gathered from the west. [from Jonathan]

Chapter 12

Verse 1

has surrounded Me Ephraim and the house of Israel have already surrounded Me with lies and deceit, i.e., the kings of the Ten Tribes and all the people, but Judah still... rules with God Still rules with fear of God.
rules Heb. רָד. Comp. (Num. 24:19) "And there shall rule (וְיֵרֵד) out of Jacob." Their kings are still with the Holy One, blessed be He.

Verse 2

joins the wind Heb. רֹעֶה. An expression of רֵעַ, a friend. He joins words of the wind, viz. idolatry. and oil Their oil they carry to Egypt to give a bribe to Egypt to aid them.

Verse 3

Now the Lord has a contention with Judah He relates to them the matters of His contention which their brethren, the house of Israel, have done to Him, so that they should not wonder when He visits retribution on Jacob according to his ways.

Verse 4

In the womb, he seized his brother's heel All this I did for him, he held him by the heel, as a sign that he would be a master over him.

Verse 5

he wept i.e., the angel wept. [from Chullin 92a]
and beseeched him When he said to him, "I will not let you go unless you bless me" (Gen. 32:26), and the angel was begging him, "Let me go now. Eventually, the Holy One, blessed be He, will reveal Himself to you in Bethel, and there you will find Him, and there He will speak with us, and He and I will agree with you concerning the blessings that Isaac blessed you." Now that angel was Esau's genius, and he was contesting the blessings.

Verse 6

And the Lord is the God of the hosts Just as I was then, so am I now, and had you walked with Me wholeheartedly, like Jacob your father, I would have acted toward you as I acted toward him.

Verse 7

And you shall return by your God On His promise and His support, which He promises you, you can rely, and return to Him. Only... keep loving-kindness and justice and you may be assured to hope for His salvation always.

Verse 8

A trafficker who has deceitful scales in his hand You rely on your gain, for you are traffickers and deceivers, and concerning your wealth you say...

Verse 9

Surely I have become rich Now why should I worship the Holy One, blessed be He? I have found power for myself Heb. אוֹן, meaning strength. Rabbi Simon, however, explained it homiletically as follows: I found אוֹן for myself: I found a deed of indebtedness for myself, that I possess kingship over Israel. (Gen. 50:18) "And his brothers too wept and fell etc. 'Behold we are slaves to you etc.'" אוֹן means the laws of a deed. Comp. (Gittin 43b) "They may write his deed (אונו) for it." Comp. (Gittin 43b) "They may write his deed אונו for it." Comp. also (Gen. Rabbah 2:2) With one deed (אונו) and with one price. And this is its explanation: "And Ephraim said: Surely I have become rich; I have found a deed for myself." Jeroboam son of Nebat, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, boasts and declares: Surely I have become rich, I have found a deed for myself, one deed, that all Israel are my slaves, for my father acquired them, as it is written: And his brothers too went and fell before him, and said: Behold we are your slaves. And whatever a slave acquires belongs to his

master. Hence, all their property is mine. Therefore, I have no sin if I take all that is theirs, for they are my slaves. What is written after this? And I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt. The greatness that came to your father in Egypt was from Me. Said the Holy One, blessed be He. 'Behold we are your slaves,' you have not forgotten, but 'I am the Lord your God,' which was stated in the Decalogue, you have forgotten, for you have erected two calves, one in Bethel and one in Dan. And according to the simple meaning of the verse, you say, "I have found power for myself through oppression and deceitful scales." And I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt. There I distinguished between a droplet [of seed] of a firstborn and a droplet which was not of a firstborn. I also know and exact retribution from deceitful scales made without understanding and from one who hides his weights in salt in order to deceive.
all my toils shall not suffice for my etc. It would have been better for you had you said to yourself: All my money shall not suffice to atone for my iniquity which I have sinned. In this manner Jonathan renders it: The prophet said to them: All your wealth will not remain with you on the day of the retribution of your sins.
shall not suffice Heb. לֹא יִמְצְאוּ, usually translated 'shall not find.' They shall not suffice. Comp. (Num. 11:22) "and suffice (וּמָצָא) for them." But it cannot be explained: כָּל-יְגִיעַי, all those who toil to seek my iniquity shall not find any iniquity with me, for, were that the case, it should be spelled יְגֵעַי without a "yud," and it should be vowelized with a "tseireh," but now it is not an expression of one who toils but an expression of toil.

Verse 10

I will yet make you dwell in tents I will cut off from your midst deceitful traffickers, and I will cause you to dwell in tents. I will set up from among you students engaging in the Torah.
as in the days of the [early] times As in the days of the early times, when Jacob, the unpretentious man, was sitting in tents.

Verse 11

And I spoke to the prophets to admonish you and to bring you back to do good.
and to the prophets I assumed likenesses I appeared to them in many likenesses. Another explanation. I gave My words likenesses to them through allegories in order to make them comprehensible to their listeners.

Verse 12

If there is violence in Gilead If they suffered from destruction and violence, they caused it to themselves, for they were but vanity in Gilgal, and they sacrificed oxen to pagan deities.
also their altars were as numerous as heaps which are on the furrows of the field. the furrows of the field The furrow made by the plowshare is called תֶּלֶם.

Verse 13

And Jacob fled to the field of Aram etc. Like a person who says, "Let us return to the previous topic," for we spoke above (verse 5): And he strove with an angel, and moreover, I did this for him; when he was forced to flee to the field of Aram, you know how I guarded him.
and for a wife he guarded the flocks.

Verse 14

And, through a prophet, the Lord brought up etc. And, insofar as you disgrace the prophets and mock their words, is it not so that through a prophet God brought us etc.?

Verse 15

Ephraim provoked his Creator by despising His prophets and betraying Him.
yea, bitterness (Heb. תַּמְרוּרִים,) they are to him for his blood which he shed by causing Israel to sin by clinging to idolatry and one who causes a person to sin is worse to him than one who kills him, as we learn from Ammon and Moab, who misled Israel to cling to Baal-Peor, and Scripture punished them more severely than an Egyptian and an Edomite, who drowned them in the river and went forth toward them with the sword...
shall be cast upon him The Holy One, blessed be He, shall cast it upon him.
and his disgrace which he disgraced Solomon, as the matter is stated: (I Kings 11:26) "He raised his hand against the king," that he rebuked him in public because Solomon had built up the Millo, as is explained in [the chapter entitled] Chelek (San. 101b).
his Lord shall requite upon him I.e., the Holy One, blessed be He, since he surpassed him in his evil deeds.

Chapter 13

Verse 1

When Ephraim spoke with trembling When Jeroboam showed zeal for the Omnipresent and spoke harshly against Solomon, and tremblingly, for Solomon was a great king.
he became exalted in Israel Thence he merited to be elevated to he king over Israel.
when he became guilty through Baal As soon as he assumed greatness and became guilty with Baal.
he died i.e., Jeroboam's dynasty was terminated, and so was Ahab's dynasty. Jonathan renders: When one of the house of Ephraim would speak, fear would seize the nations. They were great among Israel, but when they sinned by worshipping idols, they were slain.

Verse 2

And now Jehu's dynasty, who saw all this, continue to sin.
according to their pattern Heb. כְּתָבוּנָם.
Those who sacrifice man may kiss the calves The priests of Molech say to Israel, "Whoever sacrifices his son to the idol is worthy of kissing the calf" for he has offered him a precious gift. So did our Sages explain this in Sanhedrin (63b), and it fits the wording of the verse better than Jonathan's translation.

Verse 3

and like dew that passes away early Jonathan renders: And like dew, the water of which evaporates.
like chaff that is driven with the wind out of the threshingfloor Jonathan renders: Like chaff which the wind blows from the threshingfloor.

{e wind lifts up.}

Verse 4

And I am the Lord your God and you should not have rebelled against Me

Verse 5

I knew you I set My heart to know your necessity, and I provided you. deprivation Heb. תַּלְאוּבֹת. There is no similarity to this in Scripture, and its interpretation is, according to the context, תֵּל, a heap, שֶׁאוֹבִין, where they long for all good and do not find it.

Verse 6

When they grazed When they entered the land of their pasture and they were sated, then...
they were sated and their heart became haughty (Ex. 7:20) "And he lifted (וַיָּרֶם) the staff," is an expression of lifting something else. "Became haughty (וַיָּרָם)" here means that he himself was lifted.

Verse 7

by the way I will lurk Heb. אָשׁוּר. Every instance of אָשׁוּר in Scripture is punctuated with a "dagesh," but this one is "weak," since it is not a place name but it means, "I will lurk and ambush." Comp. (Num. 24:17) "I see him (אֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ) but not near."

Verse 8

as a bereaving bear Heb. שַׁכּוּל. Like שׁוֹכֵל, as you say חָנּוּן, gracious, and רַחוּם, merciful, so שַׁכּוּל, i.e., entirely attired with bereavements and ready to bereave people.
and I will rend the enclosure of their heart like the habit of the bear, which holds its nails on the chest and rends until the heart. Another explanation: the enclosure of the heart Their heart which is closed from understanding to return to Me.

Verse 9

You have destroyed yourself, O Israel Heb. שִׁחֲתָךְ.
for against Me you have rebelled: you have rebelled against your help. This is an ellipsis, but [to] one who understands the language of the Scriptures, it makes sense. For against Me was the rebellion which you rebelled, and if you ask, "What does it mean to You?" Against your help you rebelled when you rebelled against Me.

Verse 10

I will be, where is your king? Heb. אֶהִי מַלְכְּךָ אֵפוֹא. Jonathan renders: Where is your king? But I say that it is unnecessary to interpret it other than its apparent meaning. I will be standing from afar to see where your king is, for I will make Myself see what your end will be, where your savior is.

Verse 11

Verse 12

The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up I did not overlook it; it is laid up with Me.

Verse 13

for [it is] a time For a time of trouble has come upon him, from which he will not be able to stand and endure.
in the birthstool of the children upon which the woman in confinement sits to give birth. And in Old French they call a birthstool sele.
in the birthstool of the children i.e., in the birthstool made for the birth of children.

Verse 14

From the clutches of the grave I would ransom them I am He Who would ransom them from the clutches of the grave and redeem them from death, but now... I will be your words of death Heb. אֱהִי דְבָרֶיךָ. I will place Myself to speak of you words of death.
I will decree...upon you Heb. קָטָבְךָ. I will decree upon you the decree of the grave.
Remorse shall be hidden from My eyes Heb. נֹחַם. I will not regret this evil. נֹחַם is an expression of regret (נִחוּם), and the "mem" is a radical like the "mem" of נֹעַם, pleasantness, for the accent is on the first syllable, and the "heth" is vowelized with a "pattah." Were it an expression of resting (מָנוֹחַ), with the "mem" serving as a suffix denoting the plural, the accent would be under the "heth," and it would be vowelized with a "kamatz" [like כֹּחָם their strength; רוּחָם, their spirit.]

Verse 15

For though he flourish among the marshes Heb. כִּי הוּא בֵּין אַחִים יַפְרִיא. Jonathan renders: For they are called sons, but they increased corrupt deeds. אַחִים An expression of an evil thing. Comp. (Ezekiel 21:20) "Woe! (אָח) It is made for a blade." Also (ibid. 6:11) "And say, 'Woe!' (אָח) to all the... abominations." יַפְרִיא An expression similar to (Deut. 29:17) פֹּרֶה רֹאשׁ וְלַעֲנָה, that hears (פֹּרֵה) hemlock and wormwood." But I say that אַחִים is an expression similar to (Gen. 41:2) "And they grazed in the marsh (בָּאָחוּ)."
For though he flourish among the marshes Heb. יַפְרִיא. Blossoms and grows in the marsh. Among the marshes, among those growing in the marshes, which always flourish. And, since He compares him to a marsh, He says: An east wind shall come... and his spring shall dry up. Another explanation: For he decreased among the brothers, i.e., Jeroboam. He was a son who decreased the brotherhood [other versions: the heritage] of Israel. Through him, they were divided into two kingdoms. Decreased יַפְרִיעַ. An expression similar to (Gen. 16:12) "One who decreases men (פֶּרֶא אָדָם)."
an east wind shall come A king, strong as the east wind, shall come up by the word of the Lord from the way of the desert.
he shall plunder That king shall plunder the treasures of all coveted vessels.

Chapter 14

Verse 1

Samaria shall be accounted guilty From now on, her guilt will be revealed.

and their pregnant women Heb. וְהָרִיּוֹתָיו. The pregnant women in its midst.

Verse 2

Return, O Israel You, who are in the land of Judah, lest what happens to Samaria happens to you. Therefore, the topics are juxtaposed. This can be compared to a king against whom a province rebelled. The king sent a general and commanded him to destroy it. That general was expert and deliberate. He said to them, "Take for yourselves days (sic); otherwise, I will do to you as I have done to such-and-such a province and to its allies, and to such-and-such a prefecture and to its allies." Therefore it says, "Samaria shall be accounted guilty," and then Scripture says: "Return, O Israel." As is found in Sifrei in the section commencing. (Num. 25:1), "And Israel abode in Shittim."
to the Lord your God One taught in the name of Rabbi Meir: Return, O Israel, while He is still יהוה, with the Divine Attribute of Mercy; otherwise, He is אֱלֹהֶיךָ with the Divine Attribute of Justice, before the defense becomes the prosecution. [from Pesikta d'Rav Kahana, p. 164a]
for you have stumbled in your iniquity Obstacles have come to you because of your iniquity.

Verse 3

You shall forgive all iniquity Heb. כָּל-תִּשָּׂא עָוֹן. Forgive all our iniquities.
and teach [us the] good [way] Heb. וְקַח-טוֹב. And teach us the good way. Another explanation: The few good deeds in our hands take in Your hand and judge us accordingly. And so does David say (Psalms 17:2): "Let my sentence come forth from before You, may Your eyes behold the right." Another explanation: And accept good And accept confession from us, as it is said (Psalms 92:2): "It is good to confess to the Lord."
and let us render [for] bulls that we should have sacrificed before you, let us render them with the placation of the words of our lips.

Verse 4

Assyria shall not save us Say this also before Him, "We no longer seek the aid of man, neither from Assyria nor from Egypt."
we will not ride on horses This is the aid from Egypt, who would send them horses, as they said to Isaiah (30:16), "No, but on horses will we flee... And on swift steeds will we ride."
nor will we say any longer to the work of our hands that they are our gods.
for in You alone shall our hope be, You Who grant mercy to the orphans.

Verse 5

I will remedy their backsliding Said the prophet: So has the Holy Spirit said to me. After they say this before Me, I will remedy their backsliding, and I will love them with My charitable spirit. Although they do not deserve the love, I will love them charitably since My wrath has turned away from them.

Verse 6

and it shall strike I.e. the dew shall strike its roots and cause them to prosper like the Lebanon like the roots of the trees of the Lebanon, which are large.

Verse 7

Its branches shall go forth Sons and daughters shall increase and it shall be Their beauty shall be like the beauty of the menorah of the Temple, and their fragrance like the fragrance of the incense.
like the Lebanon Like the Temple.

Verse 8

Those who dwelt in its shade shall return Those who already dwelt in the shade of the Lebanon, to which He compared Israel and the Temple, and now were exiled there from, shall return to it.
its fragrance shall be like the wine of Lebanon Jonathan renders: Like the remembrance of the blasts of the trumpets over the old wine poured for libations in the Temple. For they would blow the trumpets over the libations when the Levites would recite the song.

Verse 9

Ephraim will say, “What more do I need to follow the images?” And they will turn away from idolatry. I will answer him I will answer him from his trouble.
and I will look upon him I will look upon his affliction.
I am like a leafy cypress tree I will bend down for him to hold his hand on Me as the leafy cypress which is bent down to the ground, which a man holds by its branches; i.e., I will be accessible to him.
from Me your fruit is found Am I not He? For all your good emanates from Me.

Verse 10

Who is wise and will understand these Who among you is wise and will ponder to put his heart to all these and return to Me?
and the rebellious shall stumble on them i.e., because of them, because they did not walk in them. Jonathan renders in this manner.